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Washington, D.C. 20505

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87-0107X

11 FEB 1987

Mr. James D. Watkins  
National Program for Personal  
Excellence  
Suite 248, Hall of the States  
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Jim:

Your letter of 22 December 1986 was forwarded to me. As you are aware, Bill Casey resigned as Director of Central Intelligence.

I read with interest the objectives you have set forth in your new National Personal Excellence Program. I agree that developing the potential of American youth is of highest priority and I commend you for your efforts.

With regards to Bill's support, as we both know, he is a man of commitment and sincerity. I have no doubt that if he has expressed his support in the past that he will continue to do so into the future as his health permits. In the interim, we wish you the best with this endeavor.

Sincerely,



William J. Casey  
Deputy Director  
for  
Administration

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DDA/OP/Employment/DivI, [redacted] (16 Jan 87)

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Distribution:

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1 - ER

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**  
ROUTING SLIP

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TO:

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9	Chm/NIC				
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SUSPENSE		21 Jan 87 Date			

Remarks To #6: Please have response prepared for A/DCI signature.

Executive Secretary  
6 Jan 87

Date

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## National Program for Personal Excellence

Executive Registry

December 22, 1986

87-0066X

The Honorable William J. Casey  
Director, Central Intelligence  
Post Office Box 39172  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Bill:

Just a short note to let you know that I have embarked on a new career since retiring in June as Chief of Naval Operations . . . As always, I value your advice and support, but especially now as I move into somewhat uncharted waters.

While in the Navy, I started a program called Personal Excellence and National Security. This program was intended to strengthen the basic educational skills, health and fitness and civic values of Navy members and the youth of the nation. I underlined "and" to emphasize that we found it necessary, for the first time, to reach youngsters long before age 18 to help them qualify for service in the military should they so desire. I believed then as I do now that, were we not to do this, the continued viability of the all-volunteer military would be in serious jeopardy. Significantly expanded Navy participation in the President's private sector educational partnerships initiative was the vehicle employed to achieve this objective.

Upon retiring from the Navy, I decided to stay personally involved in national "youth-at-risk" issues, but now in their broader context, well beyond the military alone. I am doing this because I personally believe that the declining national demographics will significantly diminish the base of qualified young people for the entire workforce. The urgency of this situation prompted my decision to seek support from the private sector to set up a small office to develop a plan for a national personal excellence program.

This month I obtained a small amount of funding from the Exxon Education Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with support staff and office space provided by the Education Commission of the States. The intent is to develop a plan by March, 1987 which can lead to accomplishment of the following long term goals:

- o Establish national personal excellence objectives which will call for drafting broad national education objectives (which do not now exist), including motivational ones, and integrating these with national health objectives (which do exist). Needed incentives to encourage their aggressive implementation nationwide will also be developed.
- o Mobilize the pooling of public/private sector resources and technical assistance to federal/state and local governments, corporations, schools and other groups in the design and implementation of the their own personal excellence plans in concert with the national objectives.
- o Catalyze the establishment of personal excellence programs to include pilot efforts which have the potential for replication here and abroad.

DCI  
EXEC  
REG

Hall of the States - 444 N. Capitol St., N.W. - Suite 248 - Washington, D.C. 20001 - (202) 624-5438

This program, when carried out, will include structured learning experiences and incentives to help youngsters improve their education (e.g. math, reading, writing, science, history, geography, languages, civics, computer literacy) and health and fitness skills. Integral to the program will be a motivational strategy which provides all youngsters with opportunities and incentives to serve their communities on a voluntary basis for some brief period of time. This service would be well-coupled to their total educational experience.

Time seems to be propitious now to move beyond the current acceptance of remediation as America's response to the youth-at-risk crisis; for remediation should only be viewed as a short-term band-aid solution to long term national problems. There is an urgent need to develop and adopt a well-articulated, aggressively pursued national policy of personal excellence. Focus should be on doing a better education and health promotion job in the first place so as to minimize the need to continue along the much more expensive and inefficient remedial path. Only by so doing can we hope to bring to fruition what so many good people have long been advocating . . . a higher standard of education, motivation and health fitness for this country's greatest resource — its children.

As you can see, I believe that a National Personal Excellence Program is timely, workable and can contribute significantly to the national good. As this program matures, I hope you would continue to support the concept and help me preach the good news about our young people and their incredible potential to keep America's world leadership uncontested — if only we give them the needed incentives and opportunities.

Sincerely,

*Jim*  
James D. Watkins

*P.S. Our thoughts and prayers  
are with you, B.H. God bless  
you and bring you back to  
full "Carey" strength by the  
New Year —*

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